King County	Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention Adult Divisions General Policy Manual
	Chapter 4 **Security and Use of Force**

4.03.005 - Firearms		Approved By:	Director Allen Nance
		Effective Date:	December 24, 2025
		Reviewed By:	PRC
		Review Date:	December 10, 2025

Purpose

To establish guidelines regarding the training and use of authorized firearms and ammunition, and the care, carrying, storage and maintenance of firearms associated equipment.

Policy

It is the policy of the department that compliance with County policy, local, state, and federal laws shall be adhered to for firearms in all regards. A sufficient number of employees shall be trained and adequately equipped in the use of firearms, so the department's mission and law enforcement functions can be carried out successfully. King County Workplace Violence Prevention (2021-0008) policy prohibits employees from carrying or storing weapons in the workplace unless they are law enforcement personnel or security personnel engaged in official duties. Firearms-qualified facility commanders, division majors, captains, sergeants, and officers are the only department employees that qualify as being exempt from the prohibited weapons provision in the Workplace Violence Prevention (2021-0008) Policy, unless otherwise authorized by collective bargaining agreement.

References

RCWs:	9A.16.020
	9A.16.040
KC policy:	Workplace Violence Prevention (2021-0008)
Department policies:	1.01.001 - Code of Conduct
	1.01.008 - Processing Staff Reports
	1.02.006 - Quartermaster and Inventory Control
	1.03.039 - Approved Employee Dress
	4.03.013 - Shotgun Use and Storage
	4.03.014 - Use of Force
Department forms:	Officer's Report (F-627)
	Supplemental Equipment Issue Form (F-683)
	Firearm Issue and Return Form (F-684)
	Equipment Issue Verification Form (F-687)
	Firearms Repair and Inspection Report (F-689)
	Request for Authorization to Carry/Use a Personally Owned Firearm (F-765)

Definitions

Ballistic barrel: A barrel or other device specifically designed to assist in the safe loading and unloading of a firearm.
Department Armorer: Any department firearms-instructor who is certified by a firearms manufacturer as an armorer and is specifically tasked with the repair and maintenance of department issued firearms.
Duty equipment: Department-approved and department-issued items used by a firearms-qualified employee in the performance of their official duties: One loaded Firearm-of-Record (FOR) and one department approved holster, one gun belt and one set of four (4) belt keepers, one ballistic vest, two loaded magazines in a magazine pouch, one collapsible baton and baton holder, one pepper spray in holder, one Taser and a department approved holster, two sets of handcuffs in cases with keys, and one radio in a radio holder.
Firearms-qualified employees: Any uniformed employee chosen by the department director (or designee) to utilize firearms in the performance of their official duties. The employee must attend and successfully complete the department's Basic Firearms Training Course (BFTC). To remain firearms-qualified, the employee must obtain a passing score during all subsequent re-qualifications and have no legal restriction from possessing a firearm.
Firearm-of-Record (FOR): Department-issued or personally owned firearm that is used on duty by individual employees. These firearms are authorized by the department director and shall be the only firearm the employee may possess or use in the performance of official duties.
Rangemaster: A sergeant, who is a department firearms instructor that manages and oversees the department's Firearms Training Unit. The rangemaster is appointed by the department director (or designee).
Weapons: Any item(s) authorized in the use of force as described in department training and policy 4.03.014 - Use of Force.

A. General Guidelines

1. Any order or restriction keeping an employee from carrying a firearm shall be reported immediately via the Chain of Command.
2. Upon the direction of a supervisor or department firearms instructor, firearms-qualified employees are required to turn in their department issued FOR and duty equipment.
3. All firearms shall be carried and handled in a safe manner. Negligent violation of weapons safety rules shall not be tolerated and shall be subject to possible disciplinary action and loss of qualification status.
4. Carrying a secondary concealed handgun on duty is prohibited.
5. The only handgun firearms-qualified employees are permitted to carry on-duty or openly carry while in uniform is their FOR.
6. Firearms-qualified employees are required to maintain custody of department-issued firearms at all times or to only relinquish firearms to an appropriate authority.
7. Firearms-qualified employees are required to maintain qualification in all regularly available department authorized less lethal force options.
8. FORs shall not be carried within a facilities' secured perimeter, unless authorized by a shift commander or higher authority.
9. Employees shall surrender their FOR and ammunition for inspection, upon request, to a firearms-qualified supervisor, firearms-qualified staff member as directed by a supervisor, or to a department firearms instructor.

B. Training and Records Guidelines

1. The Training Unit shall retain all firearms training and qualification records (i.e.,

qualification course of fire and gun school curriculum). These documents shall be forwarded to the administrative captain as directed.
2. The quartermaster shall retain all records for FORs, duty equipment issued, and the yearly inspections of all FORs.
3. The quartermaster and King County Correctional Facility's Maintenance and Supply (M&S) sergeant or their designees shall be the only persons authorized to issue, reissue, or exchange FORs.

C. Performance Guidelines

1. Firearms qualified officers shall retrieve shotguns at the direction of a sergeant or higher authority.
2. Court detail officers must remain firearms qualified as a condition of their assignment.
3. Firearms qualified employees shall not carry any firearm on duty unless they have qualified with that type of firearm and it is their FOR.
4. Firearms-qualified employees may voluntarily relinquish their commitment to carry a firearm by providing thirty-day advance written notification, via the Chain of Command. Doing such means the employee understands that the opportunity to become firearms qualified in the future is not guaranteed.
5. Violation of range safety rules shall be grounds for immediate removal from the range and review for disciplinary action.
6. If a violation of the range safety rules occurs:
   a. At the discretion of the senior ranking onsite firearms instructor, the employee's participation in firearms training or qualification may be terminated immediately.
   b. If this determination is made:
      1) The employee shall not be considered firearms qualified until the qualification has been restored.
      2) FORs may be confiscated by a firearms instructor.
      3) The witnesses of the violation shall prepare an Officer's Report (F-627) or memorandum describing the event. The senior ranking onsite firearms instructor shall review the report(s), make a written recommendation, and forward, via the Chain of Command, to the division major within 48 hours of the incident.
      4) The division major shall review the reports and make a written recommendation regarding the firearms qualification status of the employee within 48 hours of receipt of the information, unless further investigation is warranted. The recommendation shall be forwarded to the applicable facility commander.
      5) The facility commander shall make a determination on the affected employee's firearms-qualification status and notify them of the outcome.
      6) The firearms-qualified employee may appeal any decision on a firing range safety rule violation resulting in the removal of the employee's firearms qualification to the director.

D. Duty Guidelines

1. FORs shall be carried in the following manner while on duty:
   a. Loaded with department-issued or department-approved duty ammunition, one round in the chamber, with the magazine loaded to the manufacturer's specifications.
   b. De-cocked with the hammer in the down position (if the FOR has an external hammer).

   c. In a department-approved holstering system, which is designed for the firearm being carried.
2. While assigned to a firearms post, every firearms-qualified employee is required to:
   a. Dress in an authorized uniform or clothing (see Section T, Carrying Firearms While Working in Plain Clothes for further details).
   b. Wear a duty belt with duty equipment (see Sections O, Firearms Duty Equipment and T, Carrying Firearms While Working in Plain Clothes for further details).
   c. Carry at least two extra magazines, fully loaded to the manufacturer's specifications, in a department approved magazine holder.
   d. Wear approved body armor.
   e. Carry official department identification.
3. At the firing range, employees shall:
   a. Follow established range rules and regulations at all times.
   b. Follow all directives of the firearms instructors.
   c. Report observed rule violations immediately to a firearms instructor.
4. Employees shall not carry a FOR known to be unauthorized (to include modifications) or mechanically unsafe.

E. Basic Firearms Training Course (BFTC)

1. Firearms instructors shall design a training curriculum that demonstrates the complete handgun and shotgun proficiency of each student. The curriculum is to be approved by the director (or designee).
2. The curriculum, at a minimum, shall consist of academic, practical, and safety elements to include:
   a. 4.03.014 - Use of Force policy.
   b. Range safety rules.
   c. Basic operating principles.
   d. Firearms training manual.
   e. Using a firearm under realistic and combat situations.
3. Successful completion of the BFTC requires passing the Weapons Handling Skill Step assessment and achieving a passing score of 80% for both the written test and the qualification course of fire.
4. Any changes to course of fire shall be forwarded through the Chain of Command for approval.
5. The Basic Firearms Training Course (BFTC) includes minimally the initial firearms qualification, Taser certification, defensive tactics/weapons retention, care under fire and armed response training.

F. Biannual Training and Qualification

1. Duty ammunition shall be fired and replaced at least once per year during a biannual qualification.
2. The primary goal of the biannual qualification shall be to verify that each firearms-qualified employee is able to demonstrate proficiency with their FOR.
3. To be considered firearms-qualified, employees are required to attend each biannual qualification and attain a minimum score of 80%.
4. Only department-authorized firearms shall be used for training.

G. Remedial Training

1. Emphasis of remedial training shall be to enable employees to regain their firearms-qualified status.
2. Employees shall be allowed one opportunity of two shoots to qualify during remedial training.

H. Authorized Firearms

1. If the firearm is not a department-issued Glock-17, the employee shall:
   a. Request authorization, in writing, using the Request for Authorization to Carry/Use a Personally Owned Firearm (F-765) form and a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled qualification date, department approval from the administrative captain and firearms lead to utilize a personally owned FOR.
   b. Demonstrate a working knowledge of the firearm.
   c. Be subject to the same qualifications, holstering, and other requirements as if they were carrying a department-issued firearm.
   d. Be responsible for the costs associated with the maintenance and repair of the individually purchased weapon.
   e. Comply with the provisions listed in Section L, Care of FORs, other department Weapons and Approved Modifications.
   f. Be responsible for the cost associated with providing the holster and magazine pouch if issued duty equipment is not appropriate.
   g. Ensure the firearm is a dark or stainless-steel in color with a non-reflective finish; grips shall be made of wood or synthetic material with a dark color.
2. The authorized manufacturers and calibers of the firearms are:
   a. 9 mm, .40 caliber, .45 caliber
   b. Glock
   c. Smith and Wesson
   d. Beretta
   e. Sig Sauer
      1) The SIG Sauer P320/M-18 is NOT authorized to be carried as a FOR.
   f. Heckler and Koch
3. Department-authorized FORs shall:
   a. Be designed to carry at least seven rounds in the magazine and one round in the chamber.
   b. Have a barrel of between 3.75 inches and 5.5 inches in length. Firearms in the subcompact version (less than 3.75-inch barrel length) are authorized only for the Director, Deputy Director, Facility Commanders, Majors, Captains and the Internal Investigations Unit/Special Investigations Unit (IIU/SIU) Sergeants.
   c. Have a double action first round and single or double action on every other round thereafter. Unless the firearm is striker fired only.
   d. Have a minimum trigger pull of five (5) pounds per square inch. The trigger pull shall be verified by a department firearms instructor using a department scale.
   e. Only be used with a department-approved holster.
   f. Captains and IIU/SIU Sergeants may qualify with their regular authorized gun and a subcompact firearm.
   g. Assigned IIU/SIU Sergeants who qualify with a sub-compact firearm will also be required to qualify with a full-size firearm.
4. Carrying a secondary concealed handgun on duty is prohibited.

I. Registration of the FOR

1. The quartermaster is responsible for completing the Equipment Issue Verification Form (F-687) for a department owned FOR and the Supplemental Equipment Issue Form (F-683) for all employees who have been selected for gun-qualification.
2. The M&S sergeants shall maintain a copy of completed Equipment Issue Verification Form (F-687) and Supplemental Equipment Issue Form (F-683). The forms shall be available upon request by a uniformed supervisor, firearms instructor, or the quartermaster.
3. The Firearms Training Unit is responsible for recording the manufacturer caliber, serial numbers and any approved changes or modifications of all FOR.
4. The firearms instructors or a department armorer shall conduct a safety and conformity inspection on all FORs prior to approval for duty carry.
5. The firearms-qualified employees shall only switch to a new type of FOR during biannual qualification. If a firearms-qualified employee chooses to switch their FOR but fails to qualify with the new FOR on their first attempt, they may revert to their original FOR for their second chance at qualifying. No more than two chances to qualify shall be given.

J. Firearms Storage

1. Firearms-qualified employees shall be issued gun lockers for storing their FOR at duty locations.
2. M&S sergeants, the court detail commander, and the administrative captain shall assign gun lockers.
3. Firearms-qualified employees working in transport positions shall secure their FOR, ammunition, and other weapons in their County vehicle's safe or in the provided gun lockers prior to entering the secure perimeter.
4. Ballistic barrels shall be provided at firearms storage areas and shall be used in accordance with posted instructions whenever loading or unloading a firearm in these areas.

K. Care of FORs and Approved Modifications

1. Firearms-qualified employees shall keep their FOR clean and in operational condition.
2. Firearms instructors shall conduct a yearly safety inspection on all firearms, to include shotguns. Inspection results shall be forwarded to the quartermaster.
3. The quartermaster shall maintain the yearly safety inspection records.
4. Employees shall not allow modifications or alterations to the FOR unless specifically authorized, other than the replacement of sights and grips.
5. If maintenance is required on a personally owned FOR, the responsibility of service/repair cost falls onto the firearms-qualified employee. After any service/repair is completed, the firearms-qualified employee must submit an Officer's Report (F-627) (or memorandum) outlining what service/repair was completed to a department armorer along with the FOR, for inspection.

L. Reporting FORs or Duty Equipment Failures

1. If an on-duty failure, malfunction, or deficiency occurs with the FOR, immediately contact the duty-sergeant and shift commander and prepare an Officer's Report (F-627) (or memo) outlining the equipment failure.
2. For a department issued FOR, immediately contact the quartermaster or a department armorer to perform service.

3. The quartermaster shall:
   a. Complete a Firearms Repair and Inspection Report (F-689).
   b. Forward copies of any Officer's Report (F-627) and Firearms Repair and Inspection Reports (F-689) to the rangemaster.
   c. Identify patterns of firearms, weapons, or equipment malfunctions, or failures and notify the rangemaster.
   d. Inform the appropriate M&S sergeant of any notification made in accordance with this section.

M. Ammunition

1. Ammunition carried in FORs shall be department-issued or department-approved duty rounds only.
2. Ammunition distribution shall occur per the appropriate CBA, where applicable.
3. Ammunition malfunction or misfires of department-issued ammunition shall be reported, via Officer's Report (F-627) (or memorandum), to the quartermaster.

N. Body Armor

1. Firearms-qualified employees, who are assigned to a weapons post or detail, shall wear body armor.
2. Firearms-qualified employees are responsible for notifying the quartermaster when department-issued body armor is damaged or requires replacement according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

O. Firearms Duty Equipment

1. Firearm holsters must be department approved.
2. Authorized duty gear (belts, handcuff cases, holsters, etc.) shall follow policy 1.03.039 - Approved Employee Dress.
3. Exceptions to authorized duty equipment may be made for special assignments, when carrying a firearm in street clothes, for medical reasons, or other circumstances as approved by the director (or designee).
4. Department authorized duty equipment includes, but is not limited to:
   a. Flashlight (approved by the department, but not issued).
   b. Tactical suspenders (approved by the department, but not issued).
   c. Concealment holsters (must have at least one retention device and be designed for the weapon being carried).
5. Weapon Mounted Light Systems
   a. The authorized weapon mounted light systems are:
      1) Streamlight TRL-1 (and Streamlight manufactured variants, i.e., Streamlight TRL-7)
      2) Surefire X300 Variants
   b. Weapons lights that incorporate a laser sight are not authorized.
   c. Uniform staff must qualify with the weapon mounted light system installed on their FOR prior to carrying it on duty.
   d. Weapon mounted light systems will not be used as a substitute for a handheld flashlight and will only be used for suspect control and threat identification.
   e. Uniform staff members will check the weapon mounted light for functionality at the beginning of every shift.
6. Pistol Optics

a. The authorized pistol optics manufacturers are:
   1) Trijicon
   2) Leupold
   3) Sig Romeo (with steel shroud)
   4) Holosun
   5) Aimpoint
   6) Steiner
b. Uniformed staff must complete the department's pistol optics familiarization course and pass the department's qualification course with and without the optic being operational before carrying it on duty.
c. The optic must be mounted to manufacturer specifications.
d. The optic must be mounted to a slide that is designed for and intended by the manufacturer to be used with the optic (custom cuts are acceptable).
e. The FOR must be equipped with front and rear sights that are visible through the optic.
f. The FOR, pistol optic, sights and department approved holster will be obtained at the uniformed staff member's expense.
g. Prior to being carried on duty, the pistol with the pistol optic mounted must be inspected by a department armorer.
h. The uniform staff member must inspect the pistol optic at the beginning of every shift to ensure it is operational.
i. The optic battery will be replaced as recommended by the manufacturer or annually, whichever is more frequent.

7. Uniform staff assigned to a weapons post or court detail shall be issued and carry the following duty equipment:
   a. One gun belt and one set of four (4) belt keepers.
   b. Body armor.
   c. One loaded FOR, in holster.
   d. Two loaded magazines, in holder.
   e. One collapsible baton, in holder (baton may be carried only by those trained in its use).
   f. One O/C pepper spray, in holder.
   g. Taser and department approved holster.
   h. Two sets of handcuffs, in case(s) with keys.
   i. One radio, in holder.

P. Ballistic Shields

1. Ballistic shields will only be used by uniform staff who have completed the Department's training program.

Q. Department Firearms Instructors

1. The director (or designee) shall appoint firearms instructors.
2. Firearms instructors shall successfully complete the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission's Firearms Handgun Instructor Level 1 Certification Course and successfully complete all subsequent recertification classes.
3. Firearms instructors are responsible for:
   a. Developing and implementing a firearms lesson plan and training program for department employees.

b. Conducting firearms qualifications.
c. Ensuring range safety rules are enforced at all times and violations are reported immediately.
d. Notifying the division major and appropriate shift commander when an employee fails to qualify.
e. Inspecting, certifying, performing safety and conformity checks, and recommending repairs on department-issued or approved firearms.
f. Maintaining a passing score at every qualification.
g. Collecting the following information for all FORs:
   1) Manufacturer, caliber, and serial number.
   2) Ownership of the firearm.
   3) Date of last inspection and results.
h. Maintaining range equipment.

R. Use of Firearms and other Weapons

1. Employees shall comply with this policy and department policies 4.03.014 - Use of Force and 4.03.013 - Shotgun Use and Storage when handling firearms or other weapons.

S. Requirement to be Armed While on Duty

1. Only current firearms-qualified employees are authorized to carry an FOR while on duty.
2. Firearms-qualified employees are required to have their FOR and related equipment (i.e., department authorized duty gear, accessories, body armor, etc.) immediately available for assignment at all times while on duty.

T. Carrying Firearms While Working Plain Clothes Assignments

1. Firearms-qualified employees, assigned to IIU/SIU, shall be issued department-authorized concealment holsters and gun safes for their desks.
2. Firearms-qualified employees, assigned to IIU/SIU, may be armed when conducting official business outside the facility.
3. Court detail employees may be armed in plain clothes at the discretion of their shift commander (or designee) for the purpose of enhancing courtroom security. Any such authorization shall be of limited duration and for a specific time period.
4. Shift commanders may authorize any firearms-qualified employee to carry their FOR concealed on their person while on duty. Any such authorization shall be of limited duration, for a specific time period.
5. Firearms-qualified employees assigned to plain clothes detail are authorized to carry their FOR concealed on their person while on duty or as authorized by "Section V, Carrying a FOR or Concealed Firearm While Off Duty and at Training".
6. Firearms-qualified employees carrying their FOR in the performance of their official duties, while in plain clothes detail, shall have the following items on their persons at all times: identification card and badge, two-way radio or cell phone, and ballistic vest.

U. Carrying Firearms in Vehicles

1. Firearms qualified employees assigned to transportation detail shall have the option to carry an approved department issued shotgun if the vehicle has an installed security shotgun rack.
2. Firearms-qualified employees must comply with state law when leaving their FOR unattended in a vehicle.

V. Carrying a FOR or Concealed Firearm While Off Duty and/or at Training

1. Firearms-qualified employees are not authorized to carry a department-issued FOR off duty, except as specifically authorized in this section or subsections 2 and 3 below. Employees may carry personally owned FOR or non-FOR off duty when authorized by state law.
2. Firearms-qualified employees are authorized to carry their FOR concealed on their person while in transit to work, home, or department-authorized training locations. This authorization to carry a FOR concealed on the employee's person extends only to those situations described above and does not extend to discretionary stops (shopping, eating at a restaurant, visiting a tavern or lounge) while in transit to work, home, or training.
3. Firearms-qualified employees attending department-authorized training at an outside venue may carry their FOR concealed and in a department-authorized holster if the training course does not specifically forbid the possession of firearms.

W. Carrying a FOR for Facility Commanders, Division Majors, and Captains

1. If facility Commanders, Division Majors, or Captains choose to carry a FOR, it must be carried in an approved concealment holster; they shall also carry department issued identification, badge, and a two-way radio or cell phone.
   a. Facility Commanders, Division Majors, and Captains are encouraged to have on their person:
      1) One (1) extra loaded magazine.
      2) One (1) set of handcuffs.
      3) One (1) pepper spray.
      4) One (1) expandable baton.
      5) Body armor.
   b. Facility Commanders, Division Majors, and Captains are authorized to carry any weapon noted in Section I, Authorized Firearms, as a FOR; the selected FOR shall be consistent with the employee's training and qualification.
   c. Facility Commanders, Division Majors, and Captains who are not currently gun qualified, but who have successfully completed the BFTC in the past, shall be allowed to attend a qualification to regain qualified status.

X. Warning Shots

1. Discharging a firearm as a warning is prohibited.

Y. Use of Force/Show of Force

1. Firearms shall not be drawn or pointed unless the uniform staff member has reasonable belief that their use may be necessary. Pointing means to intentionally direct the muzzle of the firearm at a person. Uniform staff members must report all drawing or pointing of firearms to a supervisor and provide a written report, to include the justification and circumstances surrounding each individual drawing or pointing of their firearm, by the end of their shift following policy 1.01.008, Processing Staff Reports.
   a. Uniform staff members should only point or discharge a firearm at a person when deadly force is authorized. Each discharge of a firearm must be justified.
   b. When it is determined that the use of deadly force is not necessary, the uniform staff member should, as soon as safe and feasible, lower, holster or secure their firearm.

c. This reporting provision does not include the drawing of a firearm to place it into or remove it from storage (i.e., a gun locker).

2. Prior to the decision to use a firearm, uniform staff members should consider the field of fire, backdrop, bystanders, potential for ricochet, and other risks to life.
3. Restricted uses:
   a. Uniform staff members shall not use firearms as impact weapons except when deadly force is permitted.
   b. Discharging a firearm at or from a moving vehicle:
      1) Uniform staff members may not fire a weapon upon a moving vehicle unless necessary to protect against an imminent threat of serious physical harm resulting from the operator's or passenger's use of a deadly weapon. A vehicle is not considered a deadly weapon unless the operator is using the vehicle as a deadly weapon and no other reasonable means to avoid potential serious harm are immediately available to the uniform staff member.
      2) When feasible, uniform staff members shall attempt to move out of the path of a moving vehicle rather than discharge their weapon at the operator.
      3) Uniform staff members shall not shoot at any part of a vehicle in an attempt to disable the vehicle.
      4) Uniform staff members shall not discharge a firearm from a moving vehicle, unless a person is immediately threatening the uniform staff member or another person with deadly force.
   c. Prohibited uses. Uniform staff members shall not use a firearm in the following circumstances:
      1) When it appears likely that an innocent person may be injured.
      2) Discharging or pointing a firearm at a person who presents a danger only to themselves and does not have apparent ability, opportunity, and intent to immediately cause death or serious bodily injury to the uniform staff member or another person.
      3) Discharging or pointing a firearm at a person who presents a danger only to property and does not have the apparent opportunity or intent to immediately cause death or serious bodily injury to the uniform staff member or another person.